

## Endorsements and Highly Qualified Status

### Q: What does “Highly Qualified” mean?

**A:** Highly Qualified (HQ) is a term used to define whether teachers have met specific teacher professional development standards. It is a term that is most closely associated with the provisions in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), more commonly referred to as No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Quite often excellent, veteran teachers with years of experience and wonderful pedagogy are still not deemed HQ under the provisions of this law. Nevertheless, there are a number of steps teachers can take to become HQ in mathematics.

### Q: What is an endorsement?

**A:** An endorsement is attached to an educator license by the Utah State Office of Education (USOE). It authorizes an educator to teach specific courses. In Utah mathematics endorsements are required for all secondary mathematics courses.

### Q: What endorsements are available in mathematics?

**A:** Mathematics teachers must be endorsed at the proper level for the courses they teach. A Level 2 endorsement authorizes a teacher to teach Math 7, Pre-algebra, and Algebra 1. A Level 3 endorsement authorizes a teacher to teach all Level 2 courses, Geometry, Algebra 2, Mathematics of Personal Finance, Basic Skills (Math), Quantitative Analysis, College Prep Math, and Discrete Math. A Level 4 endorsement authorizes a teacher to teach all secondary mathematics classes.

### Q: What makes a mathematics teacher Highly Qualified under NCLB?

**A:** In order to become HQ under NCLB a mathematics teacher must:

Have a major or minor in mathematics education **or**  
Have a Level 3 or 4 mathematics endorsement **or**  
Have a Level 2 mathematics endorsement and Pass the PRAXIS mathematics assessment 0069 or 0061 **or**  
Earn National Board Certification

Please note that **all new endorsements** in the NCLB areas require passage of the PRAXIS assessment; therefore anyone granted an mathematics endorsement after 2007 will automatically be HQ.

### Q: What is the connection between Highly Qualified under NCLB and endorsements?

**A:** It is possible to be endorsed by USOE without being Highly Qualified; however, it is impossible to be Highly Qualified without being USOE endorsed at the mathematics level a teacher is teaching. This is because the terms refer to two different qualifications. In order to be qualified to teach a class, a teacher needs to have the required endorsements. However to become Highly Qualified in mathematics, a teacher must meet federal guidelines for HQ.

### Q: What is the PRAXIS test?

**A:** The PRAXIS is a nationally-normed assessment of content and pedagogy. The USOE has approved some tests in some areas as indicators of Highly Qualified status. Those seeking a Level 2 Mathematics Endorsement must take and pass the Praxis 0061 or 0069. Those seeking a Level 3 or 4 Mathematics Endorsement must take and pass the Praxis 0061. More information on the Praxis can be found on the ETS website [www.ets.org/](http://www.ets.org/)

### Q: Does passing the PRAXIS mean I have earned the endorsement?

**A:** No. Course work is also required. To view a required list of coursework view the

**A:** No. Course work is also required. To view a required list of coursework, view the [endorsement checklist](#).

**Q: What is an ARL?**

A: An ARL is an alternate route to licensure. It is a program designed for college graduates without teaching licenses who have majors in areas that are closely related to secondary subjects. The ARL program allows a degreed individual to teach while earning their teaching license. In mathematics ARLs are available for those with degrees in mathematics, statistics, engineering, some sciences, and other mathematics intensive majors. Upon completion of the ARL program the teacher will have a license, be properly endorsed, and be highly qualified.

**Q: Where Can I Find More Information?**

**A:** Check out the information available from [Educator Licensing](#) at the USOE and [No Child Left Behind Rules and Forms](#).

## Professional Development

**Q: Where can I find information on professional development in mathematics?**

**A:** Current information on Professional Development can be found on the [Secondary Mathematics website](#). Information about district level inservice is also housed on most district websites.

**Q: Can state-sponsored professional development be used for endorsement courses?**

**A:** Only college and university coursework that results in a grade of C or better may be used for endorsement purposes. The courses for mathematics endorsements are very specific. Inservice training in specific pedagogical practices will improve a teacher's practice and should improve student achievement, but does not necessarily lead towards endorsement credit.

**Q: Is CACTUS or college credit available for professional development?**

**A:** Some, but not all, professional development courses carry CACTUS or college credit. Read the information on individual courses.

**Q: Where can I take courses that can be used for endorsements?**

**A:** Endorsement coursework can be completed at any accredited college or university. Each university designs their own schedule and should be contacted for more information regarding current offerings.

In addition, the [Utah Mathematics Endorsement Project \(UMEP\)](#) offers coursework over the Ednet system at times convenient to practicing teachers. These courses are supported with state funds and require only a small registration fee from districts.

**Q. How much do professional development courses cost?**

**A:** Many state-sponsored professional development opportunities are free or require only a small registration fee which is usually paid by districts. State sponsored courses that offer college credit usually require a recording fee that is paid by the teacher. CACTUS credit is awarded without additional fees.

**Q: Where can I find funding for support of coursework that is not state-sponsored?**

**A:** The [Public Job Enhancement Program \(PJEP\)](#) is a program that offers funds to pursue endorsements and degrees in specific areas, including mathematics. Teachers using PJEP funds must agree to teach in Utah for 4 years after the completion of their endorsement or degree.

Title IIA funds are available in many districts to support professional development and the pursuit of endorsements, especially for teachers who must become highly qualified. Districts and Charter Schools plan for the use of these funds in the fall as a part of their Consolidating Planning Process. Contact your local administration for more information on the availability of these funds.

